

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
WASHINGTON STATE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION  
August 15 & 16, 2006**

The regular meeting of the Washington State Transportation Commission was called to order at 9 A.M., on August 15, 2006, in Room 1D2 of the Transportation Building in Olympia, Washington.

Commissioners present at the meeting were: Chair Ford, Ed Barnes, Bob Distler, Elmira Forner, Carol Moser, Dan O'Neal and Dale Stedman.

**MINUTES APPROVAL**

*It was moved by Commissioner Moser and seconded by Commissioner Barnes to approve minutes of the June 13 & 14, 2006 Commission meeting. The motion passed unanimously.*

**SECRETARY'S REPORT**

Paula Hammond, Chief of Staff, WSDOT provided information on the progress of work on the Tacoma Narrows Bridge as well as status updates on SR 519, SR 520 and I-90. She noted that the Department has received approval for its new project management software systems that will enable the Department to retrieve data efficiently, and will also provide better information for project support, delivery and reporting. She emphasized that there is still risk with the Portland Cement concrete pavements, explaining that the Department does not have funding in the budget package to support replacing the aging concrete. The Department is also putting together a core tolling support group to start coordinating all of the pieces that go with tolling and HOT lanes. Also discussed were ferry RFPs, tort claims, the Port Angeles Graving Dock settlement agreement and various other issues.

**STATE AUDITOR'S OFFICE PERFORMANCE AUDIT WORK PLAN**

Christopher Cortines, State Auditor's Office, provided an overview of the Auditor's vision for performance audits (resulting from Initiative 900 and ESSB 6839), the audit process and outreach efforts along with a status report on the work plan through 2009. He explained that the primary objective of the first of four WSDOT audits will focus on 1) consumable inventory and supply management, procurement of hot mix asphalt, maintenance-operations efficiency and highway project delivery and management (WSF exempt). The second audit's objective is to 2) identify opportunities and best practices for the ferry system. The third audit will look at 3) administrative and overhead operations across the six regions and headquarters and the fourth audit will look at 4) project planning, infrastructure partnerships with other state agencies and local governments. He provided a summary of the specifics of the audits and how in depth they will be. To view this presentation please visit [http://www.wstc.wa.gov/AgendasMinutes/agendas/2006/August15/Aug15\\_BP3\\_SAOPerfAudWkPln.pdf](http://www.wstc.wa.gov/AgendasMinutes/agendas/2006/August15/Aug15_BP3_SAOPerfAudWkPln.pdf)

## **STATUS REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ELECTRONIC FARE SYSTEM FOR WASHINGTON STATE FERRIES**

Sam Kuntz, Chief Financial Officer, WSF, distributed a presentation regarding WSF's Electronic Fare System (WAVE 2 GO) and the Regional Fare Coordination System (RFCS) (orca).

Mr. Kuntz introduced Traci Brewer-Rogstad, Director of Operations, Brian Churchwell, Financial Analyst and Dwight Hutchinson, Project Training Manager, WSF. Mr. Churchwell explained that the electronic fare system (EFS) is a versatile electronic sales, redemption and control system. The EFS will provide expanded revenue controls and minimize sales transactions at the tollbooths. Even though the implementation of the system is late, the major accomplishments are that the tickets are designed, software configuration is complete, procedures and policies and employee training curriculum are in place. Customers will experience new purchase options and convenience, revalue products, self scanning and safer pedestrian travel. The implementation of the EFS will necessitate ongoing support for the system. These costs will need to be addressed by WSF.

Mr. Hutchinson explained that customers will benefit from the expedited process and the availability of kiosks where visa/debit cards may be used. Mr. Kuntz commented on some of the challenges that have been involved with the systems software customization, as well as staffing issues due to the implementation of the EFS. The RFCS (orca) is one card that can be used on multiple transit agency buses, trains and ferries that will be implemented in the future and will provide added value or products using several methods. Orca is expected to roll out live January 2008.

Commissioner Distler expressed concern regarding where the revenue would be found to cover the cost overruns of approximately \$1 million. Mr. Kuntz responded that the Capital budget would make up the difference.

## **THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CLIMATE CHANGES AND TRANSPORTATION**

Dennis McLerran, Executive Director, Puget Sound Clean Air Agency, provided an overview of transportation's impact on the climate and the emission inventory. He explained that in Washington State over half of the greenhouse gas emissions are resulting from transportation. Climate impacts are: reduced snow pack, which impacts water supply, habitat and energy supplies; rising sea levels and increased stream flows and storm water runoff. Scientists estimate that a 70 percent reduction in current emissions is needed to stabilize the climate. Scientists estimate that we have already emitted enough greenhouse gases that warming cannot be avoided. Looking into the future, transportation planning must adapt to a changing climate that may create a rise in sea levels and intense rainfall that requires different storm drainage design. Reduction of CO<sup>2</sup> from fuel is an imperative and Washington clean car standards will be effective for 2009 models that will significantly impact emissions. In closing he noted that there will be several new transportation technologies available by 2012 that will aid in the reduction of greenhouse gases.

## **NAMING SR 397 AINSWORTH AVENUE OVERPASS THE “CHARLES D. KILBURY OVERPASS”**

Randy Hayden, Director of Planning & Engineering, Port of Pasco, Rebecca Francik, Pasco City Council Member and Bill Clark, Commissioner, Port of Pasco, presented Resolution Number 681 naming the SR 397 Ainsworth Avenue Overpass in honor of former Washington State Legislative Representative Charles D. Kilbury. Representative Kilbury was considered a regional railroad expert and educated everyone on railroad issues such as freight, connections, grades, history and passenger service. He also had an immeasurable impact on the community and worked tirelessly to improve the transportation system throughout the state. Therefore, it is fitting that a highway crossing a mainline rail carries his name. The Commission expressed its appreciation to, and respect for, Mr. Kilbury by naming the SR 397 Ainsworth Avenue Overpass to the Charles D. Kilbury Overpass.

*It was moved by Commissioner Moser and seconded by Commissioner O’Neal to approve Resolution Number 681 naming the SR 397 Ainsworth Avenue Overpass to the Charles D. Kilbury Overpass. The motion passed unanimously.*

## **STATUS UPDATE ON THE WTP OUTREACH EFFORT**

Elizabeth Robbins, Manager, Policy Development & Regional Coordination and Judy Lorenzo, Statewide Policy Planning Manager, Strategic Planning & Programming, WSDOT, provided an update regarding the Washington Transportation Plan (WTP). Ms. Robbins shared that it is mid-point in the public outreach phase of the WTP update. In general comments have all held common themes; strong support for the Commission’s vision, all weather roads system, the importance of I-90, strong support for preservation of highways and rail and addressing safety. There was also a mixed reaction to tolling, which indicates that the public is aware that the issue needs to be discussed.

Commissioner O’Neal emphasized that the WTP Team has discussed the executive summary extensively and determined that it is the most important part of the document and must stand alone and carry forward the message

## **GRAY NOTEBOOK QUARTERLY UPDATE**

Ted Trepanier, State Traffic Engineer, WSDOT, provided an annual update on highway safety. He explained that data indicates that in 2005 there was a 14 percent increase in fatalities after several years of decline. The Department takes this increase in highway/roadway fatalities very seriously and is examining ways to keep the fatality trend continuing downward. The Department feels that a lot of safety concerns have been addressed and numbers are expected to decrease. The long-term goal by 2030 is zero fatalities or disabling injuries, which would be accomplished through engineering and enforcement.

Chris Christopher, State Maintenance Engineer, WSDOT, provided an annual update regarding asset management and capital facilities. He explained that the Department remains competitive in operational costs in comparison to other agencies. Benchmarking indicates that conservation pays off.

The Department has assessed deficiencies in order to address this backlog where deficiencies are reviewed and packaged into projects, with the most critical projects prioritized within the available funding for delivery. The Department became a member of the U.S. Green Building Council in January 2006. Having accredited professionals on staff enables the Department to recommend “green” building components during project scoping, which makes the process more effective and efficient.

Megan White, Director, Environmental Services, WSDOT, explained how the Department is improving fish passage. Over the years culverts have been barriers that interrupt the migration and movement of salmon and resident fish. The Department has been working with the Department of Fish and Wildlife to remove these barriers and maintain unobstructed fish passage corridors. It is important to support the long-term recovery strategies for these species. She moved on to discuss quieter pavement test sections to address traffic noise concerns.

Katherine Boyd, Gray Notebook Assistant Production Manager, WSDOT, presented the 2006 Annual Benchmarks Report. She provided an overview of transportation benchmarks explaining that the benchmark law established a goal to improve safety. While many criteria and measures are used to track safety on the state transportation system, the Transportation Commission and the Department use the state motor vehicle fatality rate to determine progress. She also referred to two other benchmarks; traffic congestion and driver delay and transit cost efficiency goals.

Keith Metcalf, Director, Project Control and Reporting, WSDOT, reported on the success of project delivery and the development of new management systems. He provided highlights of specific projects.

For further information on these presentations please visit the Gray Notebook at the following link. <http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/accountability/default.htm>.

### **FINALIZING TOLLING STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS**

Jeff Buxbaum, Project Manager, Cambridge Systematics, via conference call discussed with the Commission the nine draft proposed tolling policy statements for suggestions and consideration.

Commissioners discussed each of the nine items and provide specific direction for changes. Item number seven, WSDOT to Implement Policy, was discussed at length. Commissioners suggested several possibilities on how the process of determining at what level the selection of projects will be handled, whether it be the Commission, the Department or at the legislative level. Commissioner O’Neal noted that he feels each of the bodies has proposed project responsibilities, but in the end the Legislature makes the final decision.

***Chair Ford called for the question to move forward with the Commission Tolling Policies with suggested revisions. Commissioner’s voiced all in agreement.***

Commissioner O’Neal requested that the meeting minutes reflect that the tolling policy does not preclude arrangements with other states to carry out tolling.

## **REGIONAL / MULT-INTEREST TRANSPORTATION PROJECT COALITIONS**

Trent Marquis, TRANS-Action, explained that TRANS-Action is a group of local business leaders, elected officials, local jurisdictions and other community members. This group's common goal is to encourage economic vitality by developing a list of prioritized transportation strategies to meet long-range needs of the greater Yakima area. He highlighted specific projects that have been completed or are in progress, emphasizing that funding requests are very specific.

Dan James, representing the US 12 Coalition explained that the Coalition is a public-private partnership working to four-lane U.S. Highway 12 from Burbank to Walla Walla. This project would provide safety and economic vitality to the region. He explained the various phases of the project and the benefits that it would bring to the area.

Karen Bonaudi, Chair, TRANSCo, explained that TRANSCo is a new coalition that has taken a community approach to develop regionally significant transportation projects in the Grant County area of Central Washington. The coalition's mission is to identify, prioritize, fund and build key transportation projects that contribute to the economic vitality and quality of life in the area. TRANSCo is currently mapping 22 identified projects and preparing a timeline of funding opportunities. She thanked the Department of Transportation for its educational support in providing successful models of transportation coalitions elsewhere in the state.

## **UPDATE ON STATUS AND FISCAL IMPACT OF INITIATIVE 917**

Robin Rettew, Senior Budget Assistant, Office of Financial management (OFM), provided an overview of the preliminary estimates on the potential impact of Initiative 917 (\$30.00 car tabs) if it were to pass. Although it did not qualify for the November ballot the Secretary of State is conducting a full check of every signature submitted. She explained that this initiative does not address recent gas tax increases passed by the 2003 and 2005 Legislative sessions. Instead it targets vehicle license fees (car tabs) and a number of other vehicle taxes. She described the potential impact in the current biennium – in the remaining seven months from the time the initiative takes effect to the end of fiscal 2007, and the revenue loss that would occur over the remainder of the biennium, noting that it results in a projected deficit position for four accounts. Effected agencies have contacted OFM for direction on this issue. If the initiative were to pass it would force quick adjustments to address the revenue loss.

## **PUBLIC AND LEGISLATOR COMMENT PERIOD**

Paul Locke, citizen expressed his concerns regarding taxes, transit, funding issues and project costs.

## **COMMISSIONER REPORTS**

Commissioner O'Neal provided an update on the status of the Rail Study. He shared that the second interim report is being drafted and expected to be released by the end of August 2006.

Commissioner Stedman reported that the Washington Transportation Plan is open for public comment. He encouraged the public to participate.

Commissioner Distler reported that the Ferry Finance Committee met and discussed funding and various other issues. He also indicated that the Request for Proposal for new ferries has been released.

Commissioner Forner reported that the Transportation Innovative Partnership Program rules have been drafted.

Jeff Doyle, Director, Transportation Innovative Partnerships (TIPP), WSDOT, clarified what the Legislature's role might be in approving tentative TIPP agreements. The issues have been discussed with both the House and Senate transportation staff where good viewpoints and suggestions were shared. The final draft of the TIPP rules has been sent to the Office of the Code Reviser for publication to the Washington State Register. The Commission provided suggestions and direction.

Commissioner Moser shared information regarding various meetings that she has attended, and also commented the importance of rail to agriculture and the economy.

### **ADOPTING THE 2007/09 BUDGET**

Reema Griffith, Executive Director, Transportation Commission, presented the Commission's 2007/09 Budget for approval. Included in the budget is a request for funding to retain consultant services to facilitate and coordinate the update of the Washington Transportation Plan. Commissioners discussed the particulars of the proposal at length and determined to move forward with the funding request. Ms. Griffith explained that the details can be visited in the Commission and WSDOT inter agency agreement.

*It was moved by Commissioner O'Neal and seconded by Commissioner Forner to approve the Transportation Commission's 2007/09 Budget package. The motion passed with Commissioner Distler abstaining.*

### **STAFF REPORT: DRAFT BY-LAWS AND ANNUAL REPORT**

Paul Parker, Senior Policy Analyst, Transportation Commission, presented the Commission's draft by-laws for review. He explained that the proposed by-laws language is typical of commissions and boards by-laws. He provided an overview of Commissioner compensation and per diem reimbursement.

The Commission meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m., on August 16, 2006.

WASHINGTON STATE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

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DICK FORD, Chair

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ELMIRA FORNER, Vice-Chair

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EDWARD BARNES, Member

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CAROL MOSER, Member

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DAN O'NEAL, Member

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ROBERT S. DISTLER, Member

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DALE STEDMAN, Member

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DOUGLAS MACDONALD, Ex-Officio Member  
Secretary of Transportation

ATTEST:

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REEMA GRIFFITH, Executive Director

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DATE OF APPROVAL